

[The children place the cookie and candy inside the box and begin to exit as they sing to whatever tune they make up.]

CHRIS: Hoppy was a good old bullfrog . . .

PAT: He was a friend of mine . . .

CHRIS: Hoppy was my beautiful old bullfrog . . .

CHRIS and PAT: We'll love him all the time.

The House of Broken Dreams

Carol Costa

Dramatic

TRACEY: 15

JOE: 15

TRACEY and JOE are sitting at the kitchen table having soft drinks. TRACEY, desperate to save her parents' marriage, enlists the help of her boyfriend, JOE, who is now having second thoughts and wants out of the deceitful plan.

TRACEY: Do you want some chips or something to eat?

JOE: No thanks. I'm in training. I shouldn't even be drinking this.

TRACEY: *[Teasing.]* We do a lot of things we shouldn't do. *[JOE looks around nervously.]*

JOE: Maybe I'd better go. Your stepmother could come home any minute now.

TRACEY: She's not my stepmother. She's my father's mistress, but not for long. It's beginning to work.

JOE: Please, Tracey, I don't want to hear it. The less I know, the better I like it.

TRACEY: You promised to help me, and I'm not going to let you back out now. I've almost got her convinced, and when they confront you . . .

[*JOE jumps up nervously.*]

JOE: Confront me? You never said anything about that!

TRACEY: Well, of course they're going to confront you. That's what parents do in these situations.

[*JOE begins to walk around and TRACEY gets up to try and calm him down. She tries to put her arms around him, but he shrugs her off.*]

JOE: Leave me alone, Tracey. I want out of this. I can't handle the tension.

TRACEY: Well, you'd better learn. It's too late for you to back out now.

[*Now JOE looks terrified.*]

JOE: Oh, my God. You're not really pregnant?

[*TRACEY laughs.*]

TRACEY: Don't be so dumb. You can't get pregnant from just kissing boys.

JOE: Right. I know that, but saying you are when you're not is just as bad for me.

TRACEY: Oh for pete's sake, relax. I'm the one who'll be taking all the heat. I'll say I talked you into it. Does that make you feel better? [*She smiles and bats her eyes at him.*]

JOE: Cut it out, Tracey. You're driving me crazy.

TRACEY: You and Cynthia. She's a nervous wreck and I love it.

JOE: You know I never understood any of this. Why are you doing this, anyway?

TRACEY: We're convincing Cynthia that I'm pregnant. She'll tell my dad, and he and my mom will have to face their daughter's crisis together.

JOE: Okay . . . so how will that get rid of your dad's girlfriend? He'll still be in love with her instead of your mom.

TRACEY: He is not in love with that witch. He just thinks he is, because she tricked him into it. Once I get him and mom communicating again, he'll realize what a terrible mistake it was to leave her for Cynthia.

JOE: I don't know, Tracey. This whole thing could blow up in our faces. What if your father tries to kill me?

TRACEY: [*Laughing.*] Don't be silly. My father is much too civilized for physical violence. He's never even spanked me or Randy.

JOE: Maybe he should have.

TRACEY: Maybe we should rehearse what you're going to say when they confront you.

[JOE jumps again.]

JOE: Forget it, Tracey. I want out of this deal.

[TRACEY grabs him.]

TRACEY: You're not backing out on me. I'm going to tell them you're the father of my baby. Come to think of it, you could deny it. That might make it more effective.

JOE: Oh my God. How did I get into this?

TRACEY: Seems to me you were perfectly willing to do anything I asked when I gave you the answers to the chemistry test.

JOE: Failing it would have gotten me kicked off the football team.

TRACEY: You got what you wanted. Now you're going to help me get what I want.

JOE: You caught me in a weak moment.

TRACEY: That's what I'll tell my dad. [*Very dramatically.*] He caught me in a weak moment. I felt so alone and unloved.

JOE: I'm a dead man.

TRACEY: Stop worrying. I told you my father doesn't believe in violence.

JOE: I think mine does.

TRACEY: I thought your parents were going to be in Europe for the next two months.

JOE: They are, but when they find out about the baby, they'll be back on the next plane to kill me . . . What am I saying? There is no baby!

[TRACEY paces for a few seconds, thinking.]

TRACEY: Look, before I let them call your parents, I'll tearfully confess that there were other boys, and I really don't know who the father is.

JOE: What other boys? I thought we were going steady.

TRACEY: Joe, try and concentrate. There are no other boys and there is no baby. It's all a plot to get rid of Cynthia.

JOE: I'd better leave. I don't want her to catch me here again.

TRACEY: Honestly, Joe—how could I be having a baby if I don't spend time with boys? Anyway, she's out on one of her secret missions again. Wouldn't it be funny if she had another boyfriend, and was planning on dumping my dad anyway?

JOE: You think that's possible?

TRACEY: I don't know. But whenever she goes out like this, she's always very nice to me when she comes back, until I get her upset again.

JOE: How can you be so mean, Tracey?

TRACEY: She broke up my home . . . she deserves to suffer.

JOE: I have to get home. I've got an exam tomorrow. You're not going to drop the bomb tonight are you? I really need to study. I hope you're not dropping the bomb tonight.

TRACEY: Don't worry. My mom isn't coming for a few more days. I want to wait until just before she gets here.

In a Garden

Martha Patterson

Seriocomic

STEVIE: 7 to 10, a boy

TOMASINA: 7 to 10, a girl

FLORA: 7 to 10, a girl

STEVIE and TOMASINA are sitting on a wall. TOMASINA is holding a rose. TOMASINA has a pair of homemade stilts lying next to her. STEVIE has a small knapsack.

STEVIE: Give me that rose.

TOMASINA: No way.

STEVIE: I said, give me that rose.

TOMASINA: [*Smelling the rose.*] What do you want with a rose?

STEVIE: I want it to give to Flora.

TOMASINA: Flora. What a pretty name. And you like Flora, do you?

STEVIE: I'm not telling you my secrets.